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ABSTRACT

This guide is designed to assist Texas Job Training Partnership Act program staff and Private Industry Council (PIC) members in developing quality local youth competency systems that reach beyond the state-established minimum criteria. Section I discusses background, purposes, and limitations of the document and cites additional sources of information. Section II reviews state policy regarding youth employment competencies. Section III offers basic definitions of competency terminology and gives an example of a competency statement. Section IV offers several factors a PIC and program staff need to consider in deciding whether to establish a competency system, the implications of doing so, and ways to manage the competency-based program in the overall service delivery area (SDA) employment and training effort. Section V is a step-by-step "how to" guide for SDAs to establish a competency system. It includes an explanation, example, and instructional notes on each of the nine categories designated by the state. It also covers PIC/employer involvement and support in developing competency-based programming, obtaining staff support, and marketing the program. Section VI describes and provides ordering information for several prepackaged competency models that potentially meet state requirements. (YLB)

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# Developing Employment Competencies at the Local Level

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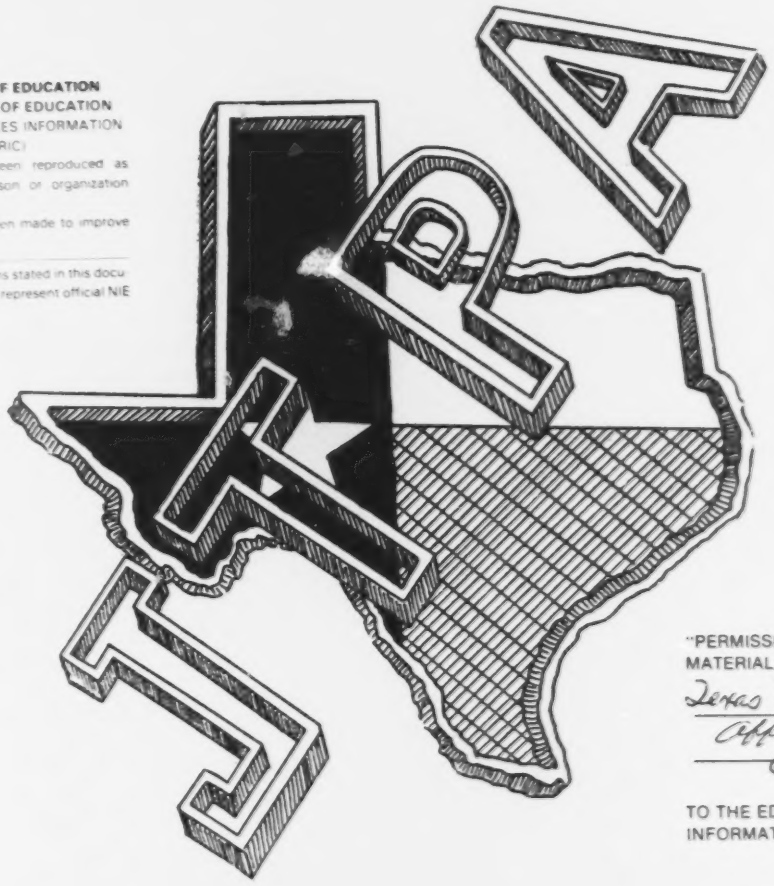


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TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

## December 1984

# TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

MARK WHITE
Governor

RAFAEL QUINTANILLA
Executive Director

# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GUIDE TO DEVELOPING EMPLOYMENT COMPETENCIES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Training and Employment Development Division
Clyde McQueen, Director
Austin, Texas

December 1984



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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GUIDE
TO
DEVELOPING EMPLOYMENT COMPETENCIES
AT THE LOCAL LEVEL
SUMMARY OF PARTS

I. Section I discusses background, purposes and limitations of the document, cites additional sources of information, and explains major differences between this document and the Brandeis University Technical Assistance Guide (enclosed).

II. Section II reviews state policy regarding youth employment competencies.

III. Section III offers basic definitions of competency terminology and gives an example of a competency statement.

IV. Section IV offers several considerations a PIC and program staff need to make in deciding whether to establish a competency system, what the implications of doing so are, and how to manage the competency-based program in the overall SDA employment and training effort.

V. Section V offers a step-by-step "how to" guide for those SDAs who have decided to establish a competency system. This section includes an explanation, example, and instructional notes on each of the nine categories designated by the state. This section also covers PIC/employer involvement and support in developing competency systems and promoting competency-based programming, obtaining staff support at all levels, and marketing the program in the community.

VI. This section describes and provides ordering information for several pre-packaged competency models which potentially meet state requirements, provided they are correctly implemented and appropriately supplemented. Inclusion of a description of a model in this section does not imply state endorsement or state encouragement to purchase a particular model or models.

# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GUIDE
# TO
# DEVELOPING EMPLOYMENT COMPETENCIES
# AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

## I
## INTRODUCTION

Competencies . . . employment competencies . . . recognized employment competencies . . . recognized employment competencies recognized by the Private Industry Council. What do these words mean? In Texas, as in numerous other states, those involved in implementation of the Job Training Partnership Act have struggled with these few words which appear in Section 106(b) (2) of the Job Training Partnership Act. The context in which these words appear, moreover, is that of performance standards for JTPA programs. Specifically, youth ages 14 through 21 who attain such employment competencies can be credited with having successfully completed the program.

Other indicators of successful completion for youth include entering employment, completing elementary, secondary, or post-secondary education, and returning drop-outs to school. While these indicators have somewhat distinct meanings, the attainment of employment competencies does not--any number of individuals may have different notions of what attainment of employment competencies means. For this reason, the state has begun to define some minimum criteria and competency categories that will assure some equity as performance standards are calculated and incentive monies awarded to SDAs.

Specifically, this Technical Assistance Guide has been developed to assist Texas JTPA program staff and PIC members in developing quality local youth competency systems that reach beyond the minimum criteria established by the state to provide truly innovative employment and training opportunities for Texas youth. Ironically, inherent in the rather vague and troublesome language in the JTPA legislation is the greatest opportunity for such innovation!

In a sense, this guide just begins to address the possibilities for competency development. While the Department of Labor has designated three competency areas -- pre-employment/work maturity, basic education skills, and job specific skills -- this guide focuses on and uses examples from the pre-employment and work-maturity area. Longer term efforts in cooperation with the education system, particularly vocational education, are necessary to develop the basic education and job specific skill areas. However, the general state policy and many of the principles will apply to the basic education and job specific categories as well. It should also be noted that this guide focuses on youth competencies specifically because of the allowance under JTPA for positive terminations of participants age 14 through 21 who are certified as having attained employment competencies. However, SDAs are encouraged to build a competency curriculum and principles into adult programming as well.

Another obvious feature of this guide -- in contrast to major documents such as the Brandeis University guide "An Introduction to Competency-Based Employment and Training Programs for Youth Under the Job Training Partnership Act" -- is the relative lack of emphasis on employer validation of pre-employment/work maturity competencies. An examination of numerous commercial as well as locally developed pre-employment/work maturity models revealed almost total consensus on major categories necessary for the pre-employment/work maturity curriculum. Thus, the nine categories of competencies which are designated by the state to be addressed by local systems provide the foundation upon which contractors and PICs can build specific competencies that address local needs. This approach leaves contractors and PICs considerable discretion as to the extent to which they wish to survey local employers in order to pinpoint specific competencies under each category. Contractors and PIC members are best able to judge how confident they are in their assessment of employer and participant needs and to what extent they need to survey local employers and/or validate specific competencies among employers before proceeding with competency development.

For those SDAs who wish to get involved in employer validation of pre-employment/work maturity competencies, the Brandeis University Technical Assistance Guide is enclosed for reference. This guide is also commended to SDAs as technically complete and helpful in providing specific instructions for developing competency statements and numerous examples of competency systems as well as an extensive bibliography for assessment and curricular materials.

Finally, except for the next section which summarizes state policy, this TAG does not have the status of state policy. It is offered to SDAs to enable them to meet state criteria as they tailor local youth competency systems to meet employer and participant needs and contribute to the progress of youth programming under the Job Training Partnership Act.

II

## STATE YOUTH POLICY

### SUMMARY

In August, 1984, an overall state youth policy was approved by the State Job Training Coordinating Council and the Governor. That policy addresses the following topics: youth competency systems and their relationship to the performance standard and performance incentive award systems; the need for program models to serve in-school youth, drop-out and other hard-to-serve groups; and the need for coordination with the education community. The state's overall position on these and other issues is expressed in the following ten policy statements.

1. The state is committed to assisting SDAs in achieving the required JTPA level of expenditures for youth (40%) and in meeting all of the youth performance standards (without competency adjustments).

2. Since the integrity of the youth performance standards are dependent upon quality local competency systems, the state will adopt criteria for the development of local competency systems and assume a primary role to assure that meaningful competency systems are implemented at the local level.

3. The state will encourage the implementation of programs to assure maximally beneficial outcomes for each of the major youth groups: drop-out youth, high school graduates, and in-school youth.

4. The state will encourage SDAs to serve high school drop-out or potential drop-out youth through state level efforts to

provide more comprehensive information about this population and to develop and refine program and coordination models which effectively serve this population.

5. The state will give priority to employment outcomes for out-of-school youth through the weighting of the youth entered employment rate above other performance standards for youth in the performance incentive award system.

6. The state will encourage SDAs to devote equal efforts to the placement of adults and youth in jobs through the assignment of equal weights to adult and youth entered employment rate standards in the performance incentive award system.

7. In the performance incentive award system, the state in PY 1984 will assign lesser weights to the youth cost per positive termination and the youth positive termination rate than to other youth and adult standards.

8. In PY 1985 the state will review the competency systems implemented by SDAs in PY 1984 and will evaluate those systems and establish standards for the "attained employment competencies" termination.

9. The state will promote coordination and joint programming arrangements with the Texas Education Agency and secondary schools in an effort to implement viable models for services to in-school youth.

10. The state will encourage services to drop-out youth by recognizing drop-out youth as a "hard to serve" group and establishing a system for rewarding SDAs who serve substantial numbers of drop-outs.

The second statement above, which concerns the adoption of criteria for the development of local competency systems, is particularly relevant to this discussion and, indeed, is a pivotal statement from which many of the others evolve. Specificially, the concern about integrity of the performance standards system is grounded in the fact that competency terminations may be counted as positive terminations in calculating the youth positive termination rate and the youth cost per positive termination; therefore, the meaning of having "attained employment competencies" should be somewhat consistent across SDAs in order for the performance standard and performance incentive award systems to be considered fair to all SDAs. For example, if one PIC prescribed ten competencies related to getting and keeping a job while another PIC required that a participant only be able to complete a job application, and both SDAs received positive terminations as a result, the performance standard and incentive award systems would be compromised considerably. For this reason, the state is committed to a primary role in assuring some consistency and minimum standards for SDAs who wish to count competency terminations.

State Criteria for Recognizing Local Competency Systems

In implementing that aspect of the youth policy concerning local competency systems, the state has developed specific criteria and procedures which will be applied to local youth competency systems for SDAs wishing to take positive terminations for youth who attain employment competencies.

1. Designation of Competency Area(s). An SDA must clearly specify in the job training plan the competency area or areas that their system addresses. The designated area(s) may be one or more of the following: pre-employment/work maturity, basic education skills, or job specific skills.

2. Employment-Related. The second criterion is that all competencies (skills) within a given competency area must be employment-related. In the pre-employment/work maturity area, the competencies must together constitute a complete curriculum which, if successfully completed, will help prepare a participant for entry-level employment. Under this criterion, each of the categories below must be addressed in any state-recognized pre-employment/work maturity system. Specifically, a minimum of one competency statement must be developed for each category. One or more additional statements should be generated for each category, to assure that essential skills within each category are addressed.

1. Career Decision Making
2. Local Labor Market Information
3. Sources of Job Leads
4. Job Applications
5. Job Interviews
6. Employee/Employer Rights and Benefits
7. Rules of the Workplace/Organization
8. Following Instructions
9. Effective Communication on the Job

3. PIC Approval. Before an SDA can take competency terminations, the PIC must approve the competency statements and the overall level of achievement that must be attained to successfully complete the program. The PIC could require, for example, that of a list of twenty competency statements (skills), fifteen must be mastered in order for the participant to be counted as an "attained employment competencies" termination. This overall level of achievement criterion is to be distinguished from the next criterion, which states that individual benchmarks are to be established for each competency.

4. Benchmarks. Benchmarks, which define the level of achievement necessary to be credited with having attained each competency, must be designated in measurable terms. For example, a score of 75 on a specific interview assessment form is a quantified benchmark; specifying simply that a participant must "do well" is not stated in measurable terms. As part of this criterion, the particular instrument or method for measuring each competency must also be identified. Testing instruments may include paper and pencil tests, supervisor observation of skill demonstrations, checklists, etc. All instruments used to measure competencies must meet the following conditions:

a) Must accurately and appropriately address the specific competency that is being assessed. For example, ability to interview effectively for a job is not most effectively tested for by a paper and pencil test which reveals knowledge of the interview process only. The participant should demonstrate this skill and be rated on some type of valid evaluation form.

b) Must reach beyond purely subjective observation. While paper and pencil tests are often superior to supervisor observation of a skill, especially in measuring knowledge-related skills which concern, for example, labor market information, paper and pencil tests are not effective for measuring all skills (see example above). If observational techniques are used, any locally developed instruments need to be reviewed for appropriateness to the local labor market by a number of employers or other objective parties previous to supervisor or instructor use. This review may reveal the need to refine language, change the weighting of one or more items, or otherwise modify the instrument. Also, training on how to use observational instruments guards against overly subjective evaluations. SDAs may use standardized, previously validated tests if they do not have the in-house capability to develop and field test instruments.

5. Deficiency Identification Process. Some type of pre and post program assessment must occur at the beginning and end of the enrollment period to assess skill levels of each participant. These assessments allow SDAs to accurately identify areas of weakness and prescribe an individualized curriculum to meet individual needs and to document that learning occurred as a result of the program. SDAs may utilize a combination of objective and subjective assessment methodologies to document participant needs and problems. For example, in the pre-employment area, knowledge of the local labor market may involve objective testing while assessment of communication skills may be determined by using the intake interview as a basis for ascertaining communication skills. To meet this criterion, SDAs need to establish and document their pre and post assessment procedure so that external reviewers can determine, through review of pre and post assessment documents, that skills attained by participants were not possessed before program entry.

6. Record Keeping. The SDA must be able to document that it has in place a methodology for assessing, recording, and verifying the performance of youth against the competency standards approved by the PIC. This is most often accomplished by placing all forms (pre-post tests, assessment instruments for specific competencies, etc.) in participant files. A summary form signed by the teacher/trainer and indicating a date of attainment of each competency is also useful as a quick reference to a participant's competency attainments.

In sum, an acceptable local competency system must have the following attributes: inclusion in the job training plan, PIC approval, employment-related competencies which address the nine categories, measurable benchmarks, a deficiency identification process, valid testing instruments and a methodology for validating locally developed instruments, and an adequate system for recordkeeping.

State Procedure for Recognizing Local Competency Systems

Three checkpoints will be utilized by the state to ascertain whether local competency systems are adequate to allow an SDA to count positive terminations under the competency category.

Job Training Plan - Beginning in PY 1985, the job training plans of SDAs wishing to take competency terminations must contain a complete description of the local competency system. The description, for which there will be instructions in the PY 1985 planning guidelines, must address all of the state criteria discussed in this section. If competencies have not been approved at time of plan submission, the description of the approved competency system should be submitted as an amendment at a later date. Competency terminations may be taken once the amendment is approved.

Management Information System - Beginning in PY 1985, a computer check will be utilized to prevent SDAs from entering competency terminations unless local competency systems have been recognized by the state and approved by the PIC.

Program Review - Monitoring/review instruments for IIA programs will contain both compliance and program management items on competency systems. If an SDA is cited for non-compliance on one or more compliance items regarding youth competencies, standard procedures for correction, as outlined in the JTPA Monitoring Handbook, will be followed. SDAs will not be allowed to count competency terminations as positive until all compliance problems are corrected. Also, any competency terminations taken in a period when the system was not in compliance with state standards will be disallowed. To avoid such contingencies, SDAs may arrange for an "implementation check" soon after the local competency system is operational so that problems within the system can be detected before terminations occur.

Guidelines for Basic Skills and Job Specific Areas

Though the discussion has thus far focused on developing competency systems to teach pre-employment/work maturity skills, some SDAs may wish to take competency terminations based on attainment of competencies in the basic educational or the job specific skill areas. In these cases, the state will generally utilize the same criteria and checkpoint procedure as previously described with the following exception: the list of categories in criterion number two does not apply to basic education and job specific skill areas. Instead, the following guidelines apply.

Basic Education Skills - For out-of-school youth, the competencies which relate to the functioning level required for further training and/or associated with a given occupational goal must be designated prior to program entry. For example, if a participant wishes to enter LVN training but must function at a tenth grade reading level before entering skills training, competencies associated with a tenth grade reading level must be specified. Or, as an approximation for designating specific competencies, achieving tenth grade level on a standarized reading test may be specified. The main point here is that the competencies to be attained must enhance an out-of- school participant's employability by preparing him or her for employment. If high school completion or return to school is itself the program goal for the participant, the corresponding "youth employability enhancement" termination should be utilized.

Basic education skills competency terminations for in-school youth are allowable, but the SDA must be able to produce some evidence that basic skill progress occurred as a result of JTPA enrollment rather than as a result of having been in school for a given period of time. Such documentation could be achieved by utilizing pre and post tests, such as the Adult Performance Level tests, which assess basic education skills as related to practical work situations.

If tutoring or classroom instruction, in turn, focuses on practical applications of basic education skills to a work situation, the post-test should show progress in the work-related basic skill area. Another example of acceptable evidence would be accelerated basic education skill advancement (over a previous school year or semester) which occurred after a participant received instruction in a JTPA program. In these cases, coordination with local schools is necessary to compare test scores or grades at different points in time.

Job Specific Skills - Competency-based curricula of training institutions approved by TEA will be accepted by the state, provided the PIC approves a given curriculum and it meets the six state criteria. Meeting the six state criteria should not involve extensive rewriting of an institution's curriculum for a skills training course; however, if the PIC wishes to delete or add competencies to a curriculum in order to approve it, it is appropriate to do so. To check for meeting of the six state criteria, the curriculum should be reviewed by an SDA representative to see that competencies are identified, standards of achievement specified, etc. If general criteria are met, variations in terminology or organization are acceptable.

It should be noted that if a participant has had no previous training or experience in an occupationally specific area, pre-testing is not necessary. To fulfill this state criteria, a statement can simply be made that there is no previous training or experience in, for example, the field of auto mechanics.

SDAs are not encouraged to utilize the competency termination for participants who are not retained by OJT contractors after the training period. Though building competencies into an OJT plan is possible, the potential for employer rejection of the extra work (paper and otherwise) required by such an action is great. If an SDA does choose to pursue this option, some reliable source, such as the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, could be used to generate a list of competencies for a given job and that list could be added to or deleted from upon mutual agreement of the employer and staff representative.

Even if such competencies are agreed upon, however, the difficulty of assuring systematic application of benchmarks and the conscientious record-keeping necessary for the competency-based approach is difficult. In sum, SDAs are encouraged to expend their major efforts toward employer retention of OJT participants after the training period.

"Fall-Back" Terminations

As evidenced by some of the situations discussed above, competency attainment is at times utilized as a "fall-back" termination if placement or other major objectives are not achieved. As discussed earlier, if a participant, for example, achieves job-specific skills in an occupational skills training course but is not placed in employment, the competency termination under job specific skills can be utilized only if the PIC-approved competency curriculum has been built into that individual's training plan. Such participants have been documented as having attained such competencies. "After the fact" competency terminations which are not built into the training plan for the individual participant are not allowed.

Conclusion

These criteria, which were previously transmitted to SDAs in Policy Issuance 85-21, apply to SDAs wishing to receive state recognition to count youth competency attainment as a positive termination for youth in calculating the positive termination rate and cost per positive termination. Criteria are effective July 1, 1985. State procedures and criteria will not be applicable if an SDA wishes to implement a competency-based approach but does not wish to take positive terminations for youth based on competency attainment.

III

# COMPETENCY-BASED EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING TERMINOLOGY

## Introduction

The base document for the definitions in this section is the DOL Technical Assistance Guide which was prepared by Brandeis University; other materials from the field of vocational education or from employment and training programs were also utilized.

Competency-based learning has been a popular concept and program approach in the education field for several years and has to some extent been utilized in employment and training programs. In general, competency-based programs are those in which needed knowledge, skills, behavior, and/or attitudes are specified prior to instruction; instruction, in turn, focuses on providing learning experiences which lead to the desired, pre-defined outcomes. Competency-based programming features an initial assessment of what the learner already knows. Success is defined in terms of individual achievement of pre-set learning objectives rather than in terms of what one achieves relative to others. A program based on these principles can be set up by establishing and implementing a competency system.

## Definitions

A competency system, in the context of JTPA youth programming, includes identification of competency areas, development of competency statements, design of a pre and post program assessment procedure, implementation of services, institution of certification, documentation and tracking procedures, monitoring and review mechanisms, and integration of the competency-based approach into overall planning, operations, administration, MIS, and fiscal functions of the SDA.

The major components of such a competency system are defined below:

Competencies are the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors that enable a person to perform specific tasks to meet specified standards or criteria.

A competency area is the designation for a broad set of competencies of the same general type. Under JTPA, three such areas are designated: pre-employment/work maturity; basic education skills; and job specific skills.

Pre-employment/work maturity skills include those skills necessary for getting and keeping a job. Pre-employment skills include knowledge of job search techniques, knowledge of the local labor market and how to use it, knowledge of job/career interests and preferences, the ability to complete job applications, prepare a resume, and interview effectively for a job. Some programs include an array of "survival skills", such as ability to balance a check-book, read bus schedules, and identify and utilize community resources as part of the pre-employment spectrum. Work maturity skills refer to on-the-job skills such as the ability to follow instructions, to communicate effectively with co-workers and supervisors, to be dependable, reliable, punctual, etc. Work maturity skills can be taught in the classroom through role-playing or by applying the rules of the workplace to the classroom, or both. Most of the literature, however, favors learning of these skills in an actual work situation.

Basic education skills refer to reading, mathematics, and communication skills needed to successfully function in the workplace and/or in a given job or occupation, or occupational area.

Basic education skills may be taught in tutoring or supplemental education classes or as part (or prior to) a job specific curriculum. Alternative schools and adult education classes represent other appropriate settings to teach basic education competencies.

Job specific skills refer to competencies that are required for a certain job, occupation, or cluster of related occupations. The degree of specificity here depends on whether competencies are tailored to prepare one for an occupational area (health), specific occupation (licensed practical nurse) or a known job (ward orderly for St. Elegius psychiatry unit). Depending on the circumstances, job specific skills may be identified and documented by institutional training staff or customized training personnel, in conjunction with JTPA program personnel.

PICs that have already defined skill levels for demand occupations in their areas may utilize these to prescribe competency criteria.

Within each competency area, one or more competency statements which define the skill, indicator, and benchmark for a given competency can be developed. The three parts of the competency statement include:

1. An expression of what the competency (skill) is.
2. An expression of the behavior that demonstrates one possesses the skill (indicator).
3. An expression of the required level of achievement expected to certify proficiency (benchmark).

The following is an example of a competency statement in the pre/employment/work maturity area:

competency — The participant demonstrates the ability to communicate effectively with prospective employers

+

indicator — by successfully completing mock job interviews with employers/supervisors

+

benchmark — as evidenced by a score of eighty or better on two out of three interviews on the Adult Performance Level (APL) evaluation form for job interviews.

Additional processes essential to the competency system include assessment and certification. Within this context, the following definitions are appropriate:

assessment - the means (tools or instruments) used to determine need for instruction (pre-assessment) and attainment of the competency (post-assessment). In the example above the APL evaluation form for the job interviews is used as the post-assessment instrument. Presumably, pre-assessment was accomplished by an initial deficiency identification process (prior to or immediately after enrollment). In addition, in some systems a more detailed pre-assessment is conducted for each competency to ascertain specific needs.

certification - the document, record, or other type of proof that allows for acknowledgement of competency attainment. The post-assessment instrument with an indication of satisfactory completion by the trainer/supervisor placed in the participant file would constitute satisfactory certification.

It should be noted that, depending upon the structure of a given competency system, the competencies, indicators, and benchmarks in a given statement may be expressed or configured in a number of ways. Yet virtually all authorities agree that the three parts of a competency statement itself must be included in some fashion and that the post-assessment instrument and certification document must be specified.

IV

# PLANNING FOR INTEGRATION OF A COMPETENCY BASED APPROACH INTO EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

## Planning Considerations

Setting up and operating a competency-based program involves considerable work. It cannot be done "on the side" without additional personnel or paperwork. SDAs need to determine how the competency-based approach will affect their or their contractors' overall employment and training program. In order to assess the overall effects, some traditional planning questions must be asked about competencies in the context of an SDA's overall approach.

Why implement a competency system?

Whom will it benefit/serve?

What are the outstanding needs of this group that can be met through competency-based programming?

How can/will these outstanding needs be met in your area? Who will provide the competency-based instruction?

How will needed services be paid for?

In answering these questions, if an SDA determines, for example, that high school seniors need pre-employment/work maturity competencies in order to successfully make the transition from school to work, the next immediate considerations are how, when, and by whom the competency curriculum will be offered.

Administrative entities with contractors who will be providing the instruction need to make some basic decisions as to who will actually design the system. There are three basic approaches. First, the administrative entity may design a competency system with requirements that must be met by all contractors who teach pre-employment/work maturity skills. Secondly, the administrative entity may require, through the RFP or other procurement processes, that a competency system be developed by contractors in accordance with state/local guidelines. Finally, some administrative entities prefer to design and teach the pre-employment/work maturity curriculum directly. In this type of arrangement, youth participants may be provided a set number of hours of instruction in pre-employment/work maturity skills. If combined with work experience or other training, the competency-based instruction can take place at the beginning of the enrollment or can be spread throughout the enrollment period. An alternative option is to teach pre/employment skills in a classroom setting and train employers/supervisors in the work maturity areas (communication on the job, following rules of the work place, etc.).

There are many options, depending upon local conditions in regard to service mix, transportation considerations, contractor capability, budget, and so on. SDAs need to thoroughly analyze area resources, intake-assessment procedures, program goals and objectives, and other essential information to determine the most effective way to integrate competency-based programs into the overall training plan. The following sections examine various areas that need to be considered by the SDAs.

Intake-Termination

Special attention must be given to integrating competency assessments into the overall participant flow process. The state is requiring that local competency systems include a deficiency identification process. This most often takes the form of a

pre-test to determine at what level the participant is functioning in the pre-employment/work maturity area. Since this pre-test or assessment tells program staff whether or not the participant is deficient in the pre-employment/work maturity area, it should be administered early in the intake-assessment process. If the participant is shown to be deficient in pre-employment/work maturity skills, the participant can be enrolled in the competency program; the test form can then be placed in the participant file to document that she/he needed the pre-employment/work maturity skills. At termination, this pre-test can then be pulled and compared to a post-test, preferably a different form of the same test; the comparison can then be used to document that learning occurred as a result of the program. If an assessment strategy, such as a rating of the initial intake interview is used instead of or with objective tests, proper documentation of the procedure is essential.

The pre and post-tests discussed above, in combination with the instrument(s) that are used to document achievement of each competency, offer a complete record of participant achievement.

If, at initial assessment, the participant is shown to have substantially mastered pre-employment/work maturity skills already, the participant should not be enrolled in that activity. At this point, the SDA may wish to enroll the participant in a training activity, in a basic skills or job specific skills program (if competencies are developed in these areas), or some combination of the above.

Management Information Systems (MIS)

The manner in which participants enrolled in competency-based programs are treated in the MIS system must be carefully planned. While the SDA may be planning a competency termination for a youth participant or be reserving the competency termina-

tion as a"fall-back", the participant should be assigned to program activities according to instructions in the JTPA MIS manual. The participant should be assigned to "Pre-Employment Skills Training" (activity code 04) only if the SDA is operating a "Pre-Employment Skills Program" in accordance with Section 205(c) of the Act. Participants enrolled in some type of pre-employment program activity not meeting the criteria outlined in Section 205(c) of the Act should be assigned into either Services to Participants" (activity code 09) with DOT Code 000.000.006 or "Classroom Training (Other)" (activity code 02) with DOT Code 000.000.008.

Participants who will receive basic education skills competencies should be assigned to "Classroom Training (Other)" (activity code 02) with DOT Code 000.000.008. Participants enrolled in job specific skills competencies should be assigned into "Classroom Training Occupational Skills" (activity code 01) with the appropriate DOT Code.

Upon completion of the competency activity, enter the appropriate code (item #134 of Acctpak) reflecting the attained competency area or combination of areas as follows:

Pre-Employment Skills (PES)* - Basic Education Skills (BES)

Job Specific Skills (JSS)

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 - 19 | PES |
| 20 - 29 | BES |
| 30 - 39 | JSS |
| 40 - 49 | PES, BES |

*PES within the MIS context refers to the combined pre-employment/work maturity competency area.

50 - 59.....PES, JSS
60 - 69..... BES, JSS
70 - 79.....PES, BES, JSS
80 - 89.....Reserved

Participants who achieve one of the "Youth Employability Enhancement Terminations" and at the same time attain competencies should be terminated under one of the employability enhancement categories, for example, "Completed Program Objective for 14 and 15 Year Olds" or "Attained Major Level of Education." The "Attained Youth Competencies" termination (Code 10, item #(36) should be used only if the participant attained competencies but did not achieve any other type of positive outcome.

## Budgeting

Several options exist for SDAs making expenditures for development, implementation, and operation of competency systems. Except for the time spent by administrative personnel in development of the system, most costs should be chargeable to training. These would include costs of personnel who assess and instruct participants and maintain participant records. Costs of consultants or trainers brought in to assist SDAs in developing and implementing competency systems are also chargeable to training as well as costs of training and training-related materials and equipment. Another possible source of funding is Section 123 education monies, provided such expenditures meet federal and state requirements as well as the requirements of the local TEA-SDA Nonfinancial Agreement. Once available, state Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) funds could also be used for competency development.

V

# STEPS IN DEVELOPING LOCAL COMPETENCY SYSTEMS

## General Procedures for Developing Local Competency Systems

The JTPA legislation states that youth competencies must be "recognized" by the local Private Industry Council. In state policy, recognition has been interpreted as 1) approval and 2) setting the overall level of achievement. As a participant in policy making at the SDA level, the PIC can also determine the extent to which it wishes to participate in the development and implementation of local competency systems. Some PICs may want full involvement in terms of establishing benchmarks, indicators, and assessment methodology while other PICs may wish to set the general policy and direction and let program staff or a sub-committee of PIC and staff members attend to the detail work and recommend back to the full PIC.

Whatever the level of PIC involvement, it is recommended that the process start with program staff (possibly in conjunction with interested PIC members) making a general presentation to the PIC on the definitions, implications, and importance of youth employment competencies. Such a presentation, based on the answers to the planning questions listed in Section IV, will assist PIC members in making informed decisions concerning youth competencies.

In the following paragraphs, generic steps for development of local competency systems are suggested. The manner in which these steps are executed at the local level, the extent of PIC involvement, and the detail with which they are addressed is a local decision. External assistance (consultants, trainers, etc.), in addition to state technical assistance, may be determined to be needed at any step in the process and is considered an appropriate use of JTPA funds.

Step 1 Determine whether or not youth competency systems should be implemented in your area. A thorough program analysis will be required to make this determination.

Step 2 Decide which competency area(s) will be addressed by the system: pre-employment/work maturity, basic education skills, job specific skills.

Step 3 Determine the specific competencies which should be included in the system. A list of competencies can often be generated by asking the following question: "What are the main skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behavior that a young person should have in order to successfully enter and stay in the work force in this area?" The nine categories required by the state can be utilized as a starting point for the discussion.[1] For example, in the category of local labor market information, the discussants need to decide what information participants need to have about the local labor market in order to locate a job within that market. Do they need to know major employers or major industries, employers that hire a large number of young people, or growth industries?

If generating a list of competencies proves too tedious or time consuming, pre-packaged competency models can be reviewed and used as a spring-board for identifying specific competencies or such packages can be adopted "wholesale" (see Step 4). However, practitioners who have developed competency systems attest to the value and sense of ownership derived from having PIC and program staff at least attempt to identify a list of skills (competencies) that they would like participants to possess as preparation for unsubsidized employment.

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[1] If, at this point, the group decides that additional employer input is needed from the local employer community, technical assistance for attaining such input is given on pages 24-32 of the Brandeis Study.

Step 4 If the Step 3 process yields, for example, sixteen discrete competencies to address the nine categories in the pre-employment/work maturity area, several options exist for further action:

- Competency statements are written for each of the competencies identified. For each skill, indicators and benchmarks, testing methods and instruments, and means of recording (documenting) progress must be determined.

- Several pre-packaged models (see Section VI) are reviewed for the effectiveness with which they cover the PIC determined competencies. If the indicators, benchmarks, tests are satisfactory to the group, one or more of the pre-packaged models may be recommended to the full PIC.

- A pre-packaged model can be adapted to meet local needs. Competencies can be added or eliminated; indicators or benchmarks can be changed; and different assessment instruments and methods could be substituted.

For any option chosen, it should be kept in mind that the final product must meet the state criteria discussed in the policy section of this document. Also, it should be remembered that unless curricular materials (exercises, forms, tests, etc) are included in the model, those will have to be developed or ordered.

Step 5 For the next PIC meeting, schedule an agenda item to review the recommended set of competency statements or the pre-packaged model (or adaptation) which will constitute the "backbone" of the competency system. Modify as necessary to obtain consensus on the statements or model(s). It is also recommended that an overall standard of achievement necessary for positive termination be recommended by the group that has done the detail work; however, the full PIC must approve the overall level of achievement.

Step 6 Develop an implementation plan which describes time-tables, roles and responsibilities, integration with assessment-enrollment-termination process, coordination with MIS and finance, etc. Hire and/or train staff who will be involved in implementing the competency-based program. If a complex curriculum is adopted, it may be necessary to have one or more persons to track the data generated from the competency-based program.

Step 7 Implementation of the competency-based aspect of the program. Begin classes and worksite activities, train instructors, employers and supervisors, and set-up documentation system.

Step 8 Some SDAs may want to get involved in marketing the competency-based program to the community. This process can include any standard public relations actions the SDA wishes to take. Particularly important to the marketing effort is some kind of participant completion certificate which conveys to employers the specific competencies achieved by each participant.

These steps have been provided to assist SDAs in developing competency systems at the local level. As mentioned previously, this TAG has been developed with the pre-employment/work maturity area in mind. It is likely that, in identifying competencies in the pre-employment/work maturity area, some of the competencies suggested will extend into the basic education or job specific areas. For example, PIC members may designate "literacy" as a needed skill. Or they may say "typing 70 words per minute" or "being able to read a blueprint." If this occurs, a decision needs to be made as to whether the SDA should proceed with development of competencies in basic skills or job specific skills areas. While experienced program operators urge developing and implementing one area at a time, SDAs are free to develop one or more of the areas in an appropriate timeframe. While the state is not currently prepared to give the same level of technical assistance in

the basic skill and job specific areas, SDAs may proceed in these two areas by applying the state criteria and general guidelines discussed in Section II of this document.

Developing Competency Statements

SDAs who choose to develop their own competency statements in the pre-employment work maturity area must be prepared to delve into the technical process of writing competency statements--and undertaking the related work of reviewing and assessing testing instruments, preparing and/or assembling the curricular materials which instructors will need to teach the competencies, and devising a record-keeping system to document achievement of competencies. All of these related elements must be kept in mind as competency statements are written--lest the statements themselves require participant behaviors and levels of achievement that are not achievable or measurable within overall program limitations. If limitations are too restrictive, however, SDAs should consider making a considerable "time and money" commitment to expanding their current capability.

Part II of the Brandeis Study (pp. 19-69) offers detailed instructions in every phase of developing and implementing a competency system. SDAs are urged to read and study the Brandeis document and utilize it as a supplement to the following discussion, which focuses on defining the nine categories of competencies designated by the state and teaching -- using examples from each category -- how to write effective competency statements in each category.

## CAREER DECISION MAKING

| | |
|---|---|
| Purpose of Category: | To assist participants in becoming aware of their interests, skills, and values in regard to employment and in pursuing an appropriate career path in light of those interests, skills, and values. |
| Possible Competencies: | Identifying interests and values; making decisions; developing a career plan; relating local labor market demand to skills and interests. |
| Sample Competency Statement: | Using the Self-Directed Search, participant is able to identify primary and secondary occupational interests and educational levels necessary for employment in the two occupational areas of interest. |
| Instructional Note: | The career decision-making category can often be addressed through use of interest surveys, vocational aptitude tests, and value identification exercises already in use in the program. This category provides program operators the opportunity to integrate the assessment process into overall competency approach. Generally, completion of the instrument is the benchmark since no pre-specified objective is designated in an area such as interest identification. Likewise since aptitude or achievement tests are utilized more for identifying strengths and weaknesses rather than for "screening out" participants, a "passing" score on such instruments is not an appropriate benchmark in the situation. |

## LOCAL LABOR MARKET INFORMATION

Purpose of Category: To equip participants with sufficient knowledge of the local labor market to efficiently and effectively search for a job.

Possible Competencies: Knowing sources of local labor market information and how to use those sources; knowing demand occupations; knowing leading employing industries and typical occupations/jobs in each; knowing forecasts for growth industries/occupations.

Sample Competency Statement:

Competency: The participant demonstrates the ability to use sources of labor market information.

Indicator: Uses standard Labor Market Information document to identify major employing firms in the area.

Benchmark: Correctly names five largest employers in the area and documents source(s) of information.

Assessment: Locally developed written forms for exercise.

Certification: Exercise with indication from trainer that benchmark has been met is placed in participant file.

Instructional note: In the early stages of writing competency statements, it is helpful to express the major parts of the competency statement separately in order to clearly distinguish its parts.

## SOURCES OF JOB LEADS

**Purpose of category:** To acquaint participants with a variety of public and "hidden" sources of job leads. For example, a formal source is the newspaper want-ads, and an informal one is friends' parents.

**Possible Competencies:** Utilizing information in newspaper want-ads; utilizing the TEC computer to identify job openings; making telephone inquiries for advertised/unadvertised jobs; using informal networks -- clubs, friends, relatives.

**Sample Competency Statement:**

Competency: The participant demonstrates ability to interpret newspaper want-ads.

Indicator: Can answer questions about sample ads.

Benchmark: Given ten informational questions on a sample want-ad, eight are answered correctly.

Assessment: Locally developed instrument.

Certification: Local instrument completed with 80% accuracy, signed by trainer, and placed in participant file.

**Instructional Note:** The pen and pencil test is an appropriate way to assess ability to read a want ad. Ability to answer or follow up on a want ad, however, would be better assessed by an observational technique.

## JOB APPLICATIONS/RESUME

| | |
|---|---|
| Purpose of Category: | To ensure that participant can accurately and legibly complete several types of job applications and prepare a job resume. |
| Possible Competencies: | Knowing component parts of job application; knowing how information is used demonstrating the ability to successfully complete a job application; demonstrating the ability to write an effective cover letter for job applications. |
| Sample Competency Statement: | Given two job application forms from local firms, participant can complete each with 100 percent accuracy and legibility. |
| Instructional Note: | The above statement illustrates the short form of a competency statement. The long form would look like this: |
| Competency: | Ability to complete standard applications. |
| Indicator: | Complete two standard job applications. |
| Benchmark: | 100 per cent accuracy and legibility |
| Assessment: | Two job application forms from local firms. |
| Certification: | Completed application forms, with trainer certification, placed in participant files. |

## JOB INTERVIEWS

| | |
|---|---|
| Purpose of category: | To provide participants with knowledge of the job interview process and the ability to competently interview for a job. |
| Possible Competencies: | Successfully completing mock or real job interviews; answering personal questions appropriately; greeting interviewer and taking leave effectively, scheduling interviews. |
| Competency statement: | The participant demonstrates his knowledge of the job interview process by answering correctly 20 of 25 questions about the interview process on Wisconsin Job Skills Test. |
| Instructional Note: | While the above statement contains all of the component parts and is technically "correct", without a performance test built in, it violates the principle of appropriateness in that knowledge of the interview process does not mean a participant can interview competently. If the performance part of the Wisconsin test were included here, coverage of the skill would be complete. |

## EMPLOYEE/EMPLOYER RIGHTS AND BENEFITS

| | |
|---|---|
| Purpose of Category: | To acquaint participant with legal rights of employees and employers, and employee benefits available in most types of jobs. |
| Possible Competencies: | Calculating various types of payroll deductions; understanding insurance benefit plans; knowing equal opportunity/affirmative action laws; understanding benefits of worker unions. |
| Competency Statement: | Given an hourly pay rate, participant is able to figure weekly take-home pay after deductions with 100% accuracy on a hypothetical question. |
| Instructional Note: | Including this competency in the system would require that staff develop some kind of hypothetical exercise where Social Security, income tax, Workmen's Compensation and other tables are reproduced to allow participant to make this calculation. Finance staff could possibly be utilized to develop such an exercise and teach this competency. |

## RULES OF THE WORKPLACE/ORGANIZATION

| | |
|---|---|
| Purpose of category: | To impress upon participant the importance of following organizational rules/procedures in keeping a job. |
| Possible Competencies: | Arriving at work punctually; returning from lunch, breaks, etc. on time; following procedures for requesting leave time or calling in sick; following appropriate procedures for actions; following complaint procedure. |
| Sample Competency Statement: | The participant demonstrates punctuality by arriving at work on time 95% of the time as evidenced by employer/supervisor attendance reports. |
| Instructional Note: | The competency is best measured in the work situation by the supervisor, who has been trained in competency based approach and the importance of accurate assessment. If no work component is included in the program, the classroom can be set up as a simulated worksite and participant can be assessed on similar benchmarks as in the work situation. |

## FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| Purpose of Category: | To help participants become proficient at following specific instructions for completing actual work tasks. |
| Possible Competencies: | Demonstrating ability to follow set of written/oral instructions, asking questions about instructions; changing action in response to written/oral changes in instruction. |
| Sample Competency Statement: | The participant demonstrates the ability to follow instructions by acting out 3 sets of written instructions with 85% or better accuracy on each exercise as evaluated by instructor on locally developed form. |
| Instructional Note: | The above statement assumes a classroom environment and actual participation by participant. The "practice" gained here is recommended even if a job supervisor will later evaluate actual performance in this area. |

## EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION ON THE JOB

| | |
|---|---|
| Purpose of Category: | To assist participants in attaining specific skills associated with effective communication with supervisors, counselors, and subordinates. |
| Possible Competencies: | Accepting and responding to criticism; conveying orders/instructions to others; reporting (verbal and written) to supervisors; dealing with anger and frustration; solving problems. |
| Sample Statement: | In a mock conversation with a supervisor, participant demonstrates ability to accept criticism in a constructive way as verified by a rating of 75 or better on a locally developed instructor evaluation form. |
| Instructional Note: | It is important that a local form to evaluate an intangible skill of this nature be tested in several situations with different actors, role reversals, etc. Again, though, it is particularly important that this type of practice precede "on-the-job" experience of the situation. |

Issues

The above examples point both to the advantages and disadvantages of local development of competency systems. It can readily be seen that deciding on competencies, indicators, benchmarks, and assessment instruments increases flexibility to tailor a system which the SDA has the capability to administer and which meets the needs of the target population. However, the question of coverage of each category arises when each competency statement seems to suggest five additional statements. Local decisions as to what to exclude may be as difficult as what to include.

The examples also cause one to face squarely the issue of testing -- for in every statement which designates a "locally developed" instrument, such an instrument must be developed and tested. The wholesale adaptation of standardized tests, while often meeting the validity requirement, may not be appropriate to the population or the locally designed curriculum. Observational techniques usher in concerns about the objectivity of the observer - and thus the "fairness" to the participant.

Another concern is curriculum. For every competency, teaching materials (with instructions) requires staff person(s) who can develop curricular material or review available materials and train instructional staff in use of selected materials. The SDA or contractor who has already experimented with various assessment and curricular materials is at an advantage, since existing learning objectives can often be "translated" into a competency-based format, i.e. the competency statements can be derived from the curriculum already established and found satisfactory by the SDA.

Excellent instructions on how to develop assessment strategies, valid instruments, documentation, certification, and monitoring systems are available in Part II of the Brandeis document; extensive bibliography and ordering information on assessment instruments, curricula, guidance documents, and "model" competency systems are

provided in the Appendices to the document. For those SDAs who wish to undertake local development of a system, generally accepted advice is to start slowly and gradually add to or refine the system as experience is gained. Using this approach, a relatively straightforward pre-employment/work maturity program can be developed which will meet state requirements and participant needs.

The following section describes several pre-packaged pre-employment/work maturity competency systems.

VI

## EXISTING COMPETENCY SYSTEMS

Descriptions and ordering information on several pre-packaged competency models are contained in this section. The state has reviewed these models and assessed them as having the potential to meet basic state requirements, provided they are correctly implemented and, in some cases, supplemented. Some of these models come complete with pre-tests, curricular materials, post-tests, and fully developed competency statements. Others provide only skeletal systems which must be supplemented by curricular materials or pre and post-tests. Some use a different competency vocabulary than the one in this TAG. All address the state designated categories, even though some do so indirectly.

The individual descriptions will offer some assessment of the advantages and limitations of each of these models. However, SDAs will finally need to assess these models in light of PIC policy, current assessment methodology and instruments, curriculum materials available to them, staff capability, financial constraints, and other local conditions.

It should be noted that numerous other competency systems are available and SDAs are encouraged to investigate and adapt/adopt any system which meets their needs and state criteria. The inclusion of a system in this TAG does not imply state endorsement of a given system or state encouragement to adopt or purchase such a system.

## MODEL DESCRIPTION

Title: Wisconsin Youth Employment Competencies Program

Publisher/Author: Employment and Training Institute (ETI), University of Wisconsin, Division of Urban Outreach, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Standards: For pre-employment/work maturity area (called Job Skills in this model), University of Texas APL and Clovis Adult School (Clovis and Pitman) tests were used as a gauge for determining areas to be tested and levels of difficulty. ETI was funded by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction to develop the curriculum for use in the Department of Corrections.

Competency Areas: Job skills (equivalent of pre-employment/work maturity) is part of survival skills and basic education skills tests and curricula.

Number of Competencies: 98 in all: 7 broad competencies with 29 learning objectives in pre-employment/work maturity area (see attached).

Materials Provided: For the seven broad competencies, two forms of an objective test (20 questions each) are provided. Standard for competence is 80%. Also, performance tests and criteria for scoring written exercises are available where applicable. The volume also suggests classroom activities, student readings and worksheets, and supplementary curricular activities. Curricular materials from APL and Clovis Adult School are recommended and listed, but not provided.

Instructional Setting: Classroom; could be adapted for self-paced, individualized, open entry-open exit.

Cost: Job Skills - Competencies Curricula and Tests $15.00
Survival Skills and Basic Skills Competencies and Tests $95.00

Curricular material extra, through newspapers and other community resources could be used extensively.

Discussion: This is one of three models which ETI is strongly recommending that Wisconsin SDAs use. A primary advantage of this system is that two forms of an objective test are included for each of the seven broad competencies; however, no overall pre and post tests for the pre-employment /work maturity areas are included. Such tests could be constructed from the subtests; however, for some competencies, for example, the job interview, performance tests are also included. The material is geared to participants with poor reading levels. The availability of survival and basic skills tests and materials allow SDA to expand system to include these areas.

Ordering Information: Program is available from Employment and Training Institute, University of Wisconsin, P.O. Box 413, Milwaukee, WI. 53201. Contact Lois Quinn or John Pawasarat (414) 963-6387 or 963-4934 or Patrick Sweeney, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 125 S. Webster St., P. O. Box 7841, Madison, WI. 53707, (608) 266-2158.

# J O B  S K I L L S

## Youth Employment Competencies

1. Identify resources and procedures for seeking a job.

   A. Use help wanted ads as a source of job information.
   B. Identify the free services provided by the state employment agency in helping people find jobs and job training.
   C. Determine how private employment agencies operate to help people find jobs for a fee.
   D. Identify the procedures involved in applying directly for jobs at company personnel offices.

2. Complete a job application form.

   A. Identify the purpose of job application forms.
   B. Read and complete those parts of a job application form asking for personal facts.
   C. Read and complete those parts of a job application form asking for job interests and job skills.
   D. Read and complete that part of job application form asking for references.
   E. Read and complete those parts of a job application form asking for education and employment records.

3. Demonstrate ability to participate effectively in a job interview.

   A. Identify the purpose of job interviews.
   B. Identify the necessary steps in getting ready for a job interview.
   C. Differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate behavior during a job interview.

4. Identify proper work habits, attitude, and behavior.

   A. Identify the purpose of the probation period at the start of a new job.
   B. Identify appropriate behavior in learning the job and working with others.
   C. Distinguish between good and bad work habits.
   D. Identify the factors that make up a positive job attitude.
   E. Recognize acceptable ways of dealing with problems at work.

5. Describe standard benefits and payroll structures.

   A. Define basic terms about wages and salary, identify standard paycheck deductions, and do simple computations related to salary.
   B. Identify and describe common company benefits.
   C. Identify the purpose of workers' compensation and describe the benefits it provides.
   D. Identify the purpose of unemployment insurance and disability insurance and describe the benefits they provide.

6. Develop a personal career plan.

   A. Identify career goals and how to achieve these goals based on personal and labor market information, including a career plan.
   B. Assess personal aptitudes, abilities, interests, values, and needs.
   C. Determine an occupational preference and make a career choice based on assessment of needs.
   D. Recognize that career goals and planning is an on-going rather than a single life event.

7. Use labor market information to find jobs.

   A. Identify the requirements for various fields of work.
   B. Describe where and how to get labor market information.
   C. Use information sources and occupational and professional organizations to identify occupations and professions.
   D. Evaluate educational opportunities including college, vocational training, home-study programs, adult and life-long learning.

## MODEL DESCRIPTION

Title: Maine Pre-employment Competencies System

Publisher/Author: Youth Credentials Work Group, Maine Department of Labor.

Standards: System is based on Maine's previous experience with competency-based programming under CETA/JTPA. The Training Development Corporation in Bangor, the Coastal Economic Development Corporation, and Mountain Valley Training are listed as agencies which have operated such programs and have contributed to this model.

Competency Areas: This model addresses pre-employment/work maturity skills only.

Number of Competencies/Level of Detail: A total of fifteen specific competencies (see next page) are designated in four categories: Career Decision Making, Life/Work Management, Job Getting, Work Maturity. The system also includes 2-5 specific abilities under each of the fifteen competencies.

Materials Provided: The document includes a description of competencies, suggests benchmarks, assessment instruments, certification methods and forms, as well as instructions for implementation.

Instructional Setting: Small group instruction for individuals assessed at similar level; adaptable to individualized programming.

Cost: Free.

Discussion: The model is probably most complete from a "systems" point of view and offers the beginner helpful explanations and instructions on setting up and utilizing competency systems. The model, however, lacks the objectivity of some by depending more on supervisor/instructor evaluation/ratings and written products than on objective tests. Thus, demonstration of skills is emphasized and much discretion left to the instructor/supervisor. Pre and post tests for the entire system are not included and would have to be developed based on the tests for specific competencies. SDAs may wish to examine the model and modify in light of their own needs and capability. Many helpful "starter" exercises are included in this volume, but quality of reproduced materials and some other aspects is not the same as the more "commercial" packages.

Ordering Information: Call Pat Chaplin at TDCA (Extension 282) if you want the state to reproduce a copy for you. Contact person in Maine: Pete Thibodeau, Jobs Training Administrative Office, Hospital Street, Station #55, Augusta, Maine 04330, (207) 289-3375.

MAINE

Pre-employment Competency Areas

And Specific Competencies

| Competency Area: Career Decision-Making | Competency Area: Life/ Work Management | Competency Area: Job Getting | Competency Area: Work Maturity |
|---|---|---|---|
| Specific Competencies - Client is able to: | Specific Competencies - Client is able to: | Specific Competencies - Client is able to: | Specific Competencies - Client is able to: |
| Self-Assessment - Assess values, identify skills, describe obstacles to employment | Managing Personal Responsibility - Provide for basic needs, transportation and day care. Use consumer skills, manage money. Be aware of employers' expectations regarding substance abuse. | Job Seeking - Identify job opportunities | Dependability/Reliability - Maintain an acceptable attendance record, maintain punctuality, give notice of interruptions, demonstrate reliability, follow rules of the work place |
| Career Awareness - Identify career clusters, know specific jobs in clusters and job duties | Problem Solving/Coping - Identify a problem, get more information, analyze it, develop alternatives, select a course of action, persevere through obstacles | Resumes and applications - Complete an application and a resume | Communication Skills - Follow instructions, ask for clarification, use listening skills |
| Labor Market Information - Describe current local labor market, growth occupations, relate career choice to local labor market | | Contact Skills - Contact employers by phone, letter, or in person | Personal Relations - Maintain positive attitudes toward others, accept supervision and criticism, cooperate with others and accept chain of command |
| Career Choice - Select an appropriate career goal, know how skills could be used in other jobs, plan for career goal and develop specific steps | | Interviewing - Schedule, prepare for, complete, and evaluate an interview | Initiative/Productivity - Organize time effectively, be responsible, care about the quality of work |
| | | | Worker Rights - Understand use of tax forms, employee benefits, legal rights and responsibilities of the work place |

## MODEL DESCRIPTION

Title: Adult Performance Level - Adult Competency Education.

Author: Program is based on Adult Performance Level Project Research Conducted by Industrial and Business Training Bureau, University of Texas at Austin, March 1975.

Standards: Research Grant funded by the Department of Education. Project staff set out to identify basic requirements for adult living, designated five subject areas for competencies (see below), and developed performance objectives for each competency. Initial record of field testing with 3,500 adults; several thousand more adults continue to be field tested and performance indicators are in constant revision. Final stage in process is determination of competency levels which classify adults in three levels (function with difficulty, functional adults, proficient adults). This is the nationally recognized competency model on which many others (Wisconsin, Clovis) have been based.

Competency Areas: Occupational Knowledge, Consumer Economics, Government and Law, Community Resources, and Health are covered using computational, communication (reading, writing, speaking, and listening), and problem-solving skills in each area. Life skills activities and the opportunity to demonstrate specific job skills are also included as well as the opportunity to earn a high school diploma. However, if a program is used for a high school diploma credential, the local school district must have approved this system for awarding diplomas.

Number of Competencies: In the five areas, there are a total of 42 objectives. The occupational knowledge category, which most closely approximates the pre- employment/work maturity area, contains 10 broad objectives which represent a large number of related competencies (see next page).

Materials Provided: Complete set of materials available to set up system through private publishers and the University of Texas (UT). Content area measures (pre and post-tests) and technical assistance and training are available through private consultant services.

Method of Instruction: Individualized, self-paced open-entry/open-exit; adaptable to group sessions.

Cost: Approximately $60 per person for all five areas covers content area measures and curricular materials. Training and services can be obtained through payment for consultant services.

Discussion:

The main advantage of this system for JTPA is that basic skills are taught as participants master the knowledge areas. Participants are tested for functional level and begin study of content area according to their classification and continue in that area until they reach APL Level 3 (proficient adults). It is possible for JTPA operators, for example, to offer only the occupational knowledge curriculum and then decide whether they want to expand program to other content areas. Teacher training is provided but TEA teacher certification is not required unless high school diploma is offered. Several adult education cooperatives in the state offer the diploma option.

Ordering Information: Elaine Shelton, Shelton Associates, (512) 444-3488, is availabe to SDAs for training and technical assistance. The APL curricular materials can be ordered from Harcourt, Brace, and Javanovich.

## OBJECTIVES FOR FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCY

### OCCUPATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

GOAL: TO DEVELOP A LEVEL OF OCCUPATIONAL KNOWLEDGE WHICH WILL ENABLE ADULTS TO SECURE EMPLOYMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR INDIVIDUAL NEEDS AND INTERESTS.

1. OBJECTIVE: To build an oral and written vocabulary related to occupational knowledge.

2. OBJECTIVE: To identify sources of information (e.g., radio broadcasts, newspapers, etc.) which may lead to employment.

3. OBJECTIVE: To define occupational categories in terms of the education and job experience required, and to know minimum requirements of given occupations.

4. OBJECTIVE: To be aware of vocational testing and counseling methods which help prospective employees recognize job interests and qualifications.

5. OBJECTIVE: To understand the differences among commercial employment agencies, government employment agencies and private employers.

6. OBJECTIVE: To prepare for job applications and interviews.

7. OBJECTIVE: To know standards of behavior for various types of employment.

8. OBJECTIVE: To know attributes and skills which may lead to promotion.

9. OBJECTIVE: To know the financial and legal aspects of employment.

10. OBJECTIVE: To understand aspects of employment other than financial which would affect the individual's satisfaction with a job.

## MODEL DESCRIPTION

Title: The Comprehensive Competencies Program

Author/Publisher: Bob Taggart, Remediation and Training Institute

Standards: System is described by its authors as "eclectic" in that it utilizes approaches, lessons, objectives, curriculum materials, and tests from Job Corps, APL, GED, and other public and private sources. CCP is based on materials that have been tested and proven effective with disadvantaged learners.

Competency Areas: Academic and Functional Components. Academic includes skills in basic through advanced skills in reading, writing, mathematics, social studies, science, and literature. CCP includes academic materials from third grade through college preparatory reading levels. Functional components are borrowed from APL categories: occupational knowledge, consumer economics, citizenship, community resources and health.

Number of Competencies/Level of Detail: Within each broad area, Functional and Academic, there are three learning tiers: basic, intermediate, advanced. Each tier is divided according to subject and level. The subject strand which includes the pre-employment/work maturity area is the "occupational knowledge" strand. Levels are divided into units which teach specific competencies. For example, within the career choice level, there are three units which teach three specific skills. Each unit is further broken down into "bite size" lessons.

Material Provided: The CCP program offers a structured curriculum, including lession plans, assessment and computer scored instruments, aids, training, administrative software, and instructions. Curricular materials are referenced and can be ordered from a variety of private and public sources. Hardware must be purchased separately.

Instructional Setting: The curriculum is designed for individualized, self-paced instruction in open entry/open-exit programs. Supplemental activities may be added for classroom or small group work. To accomodate differences in learning styles. CCP takes a mixed media approach using print, audio-visual, and computer-based learning materials.

Cost: Start-up investment including hardware, curricular materials, and technical assistance and training runs from $30,000 to $55,000 per site. In addition, RTI charges an annual user fee estimated at $1,000 per site for updating, expanding and improving the system, and maintaining quality control. Well-managed existing sites have posted costs as low as $2 per instructional hour including amortization of initial investment costs.

Discussion: Parts of the CCP can be utilized according to state/local needs. Entire set is several volumes and is the most ambitious and sophisticated effort to design a system to specifically meet the needs of employment and training programs. Computer assisted instruction is not a mandatory element of CCP; however, at a minimum, RTI strongly recommends use of a microcomputer for scoring tests and other administrative chores, thus freeing the instructor for more effective teaching. The learning of academic skills before or at the same time as functional skills is built into this system. Therefore, a commitment to basic skills instruction as well as pre-employment/work maturity and other functional skills is necessary.

Ordering Information: Contact Remediation and Training Institute, 206 King Street, Alexandria, VA. 22312. Phone number is (703) 836-7030. After February 15, 1985, address is 1521 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005. The contact person for CCP in Texas is Dr. Robert Glover, 6711 Comanche Trail, Austin, Texas; phone (512) 266-1076 or 471-7891.

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## Academic Competencies Components

TIER I. BASIC

| | Subject Strand 1. Mathematics | Subject Strand 2. Reading Language Skills |
|---|---|---|
| Level 1. | Addition | Grade 1 Equivalent |
| Level 2. | Subtraction | Grade 2 Equivalent |
| Level 3. | Multiplication | Grade 3 Equivalent |
| Level 4. | Division | Grade 4 Equivalent |

TIER II. INTERMEDIATE

| | Subject Strand 1. Mathematics | Subject Strand 2. Development Reading | Subject Strand 3. Specific Language Skills |
|---|---|---|---|
| Level 1. | Fractions | Grade 5 Reading | Specific Skills 1 |
| Level 2. | Measurements | Grade 6 Reading | Specific Skills 2 |
| Level 3. | Decimals & Percents | Grade 7 Reading | Specific Skills 3 |
| Level 4. | Personal Math | Grade 8 Reading | Specific Skills 4 |

TIER III. ADVANCED

| | Subject Strand 1. Mathematics | Subject Strand 2. Reading and Humanities | Subject Strand 3. Writing | Subject Strand 4. Social Studies | Subject Strand 5. Science |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Level 1. | Primary GED | Primary GED | Primary GED | Primary GED | Primary GED |
| Level 2. | Comprehensive GED | Comprehensive GED | Comprehensive GED | Comprehensive GED | Comprehensive GED |
| Level 3. | Primary College Prep | Primary College Prep | Primary College Prep | Primary College Prep | Primary College Prep |
| Level 4. | Comprehensive College Prep | Comprehensive College Prep | Comprehensive College Prep | Comprehensive College Prep | Comprehensive College Prep |

## Functional Competencies Component

TIER I. BASIC

| | Subject Strand 1. Occupational Knowledge | Subject Strand 2. Coping Skills |
|---|---|---|
| Level 1. | Career Choice | Independent Living |
| Level 2. | Job Search | Money Management |
| Level 3. | Job Getting | Nutrition, Food, and Health |
| Level 4. | Job Holding | Government and Community Resources |

TIER II. INTERMEDIATE

| | Subject Strand 1. Occupational Knowledge | Subject Strand 2. Consumer Economics | Subject Strand 3. Life Skills |
|---|---|---|---|
| Level 1. | Career Choice | Budgeting | Independent Living |
| Level 2. | Job Search | Banking, Credit and Insurance | Family and Self |
| Level 3. | Job Getting | Comparison Shopping | Community Resources |
| Level 4. | Job Holding | Personal Possessions | Government and Law |

TIER III. ADVANCED

| | Subject Strand 1. Occupational Knowledge | Subject Strand 2. Consumer Economics | Subject Strand 3. Government and Law | Subject Strand 4. Health | Subject Strand 5. Community Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Level 1. | Career Choice | Budgeting and Managing Resources | Government Structure and Functions | Preventive Care and Maintenance | Information Sources |
| Level 2. | Job Search | Comparison Shopping | Citizenship | Medical Care | Transportation |
| Level 3. | Job Getting | Banking, Credit, Insurance and Taxes | Law | Self and Family | Community Services |
| Level 4. | Job Holding | Possessions | Contracts and Documents | Parenting | Recreational Services |